

Long Island Sound is a \$9 billion economic engine

Washington, DC – On Friday, Reps. Steve Israel (D – NY) and Rosa DeLauro (D – CT) announced the introduction of new bipartisan legislation to protect Long Island Sound. The Long Island Sound Stewardship and Restoration Act will advance the protection and restoration of this key estuary.

“Long Island Sound is critical to our regional economy, our environment and our community. If we don’t protect and restore the Sound, a \$9 billion economic engine, we will damage industries and ultimately lose jobs. That’s why I’m continuing my efforts to preserve, protect and restore the Sound,” said Rep. Israel, a co-chair of the Long Island Sound Caucus.

“Long Island Sound is a regional and a national treasure, as well as a critical economic, recreational, and environmental resource. I believe we have a responsibility to ensure its protection and preservation, and I am proud to be a co-chair of the Congressional Long Island Sound Caucus,” said Rep. DeLauro. “I will continue to fight for the funding needed to preserve this pristine, beautiful and vibrant ecosystem so that generations of Americans can continue to enjoy it.”

“The Long Island Sound is a national treasure and a nearly \$9 billion economic engine,” said Rep. Tim Bishop (D – NY). “This legislation is a positive step on the path towards an appropriate level of federal support to continue water quality improvements in the Sound’s watershed and enhance its already-significant contributions to jobs in our region.”

“The Long Island Sound is among our most valuable and precious resources,” said Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-NY). “It is imperative that we continue working to protect this national treasure, and the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Act would go a long way towards improving water quality, preventing further deterioration, and addressing critical conservation needs.”

“The Long Island Sound is one of the most important economic and environmental resources in our region. Investing in programs to keep the Sound healthy will ensure that it can be enjoyed

by future generations and the wildlife that calls the Sound home,” said Rep. Joe Crowley (D – NY).

“The Long Island Sound will have a much brighter future if this bill is passed,” said Rep. Serrano. “We must take steps like these to restore and protect our region’s natural resources for generations to come.”

Long Island Sound is a 1,320 square mile estuary designated as an Estuary of National Significance. It is being threatened by pollution and habitat loss. More than 21 million people live within 50 miles of the sound and it contributes an estimated \$8.91 billion a year to the surrounding economies.

Funding authorized under this legislation will go toward cleanup, water quality, shoreline preservation and other critical environmental and conservation needs of the Sound.

Congress has previously authorized funding to support Long Island Sound under the Long Island Sound Restoration Act (passed in 2000 & 2005) and the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act (passed in 2006). The Long Island Sound Stewardship and Restoration Act streamlines the authorization process and dedicates funds to a Long Island Sound Program so funding can be put toward the most critical issues. The legislation will also improve coordination among federal, state and local agencies and require regular reporting on the use of the funds.

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D – NY) is introducing the Long Island Sound Stewardship and Restoration Act today in the United States Senate.

"Over the last decade, we have made meaningful strides in restoring the water quality and the ecology of the Sound but we have more work ahead. The leadership of Congressman Israel and Congresswoman DeLauro will help us keep the momentum in protecting this economic engine and ecological treasure," said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director, Citizens Campaign for the Environment.

“The waters and wildlife of Long Island Sound don’t recognize geographic and political

boundaries, and we are fortunate that, when it comes to the Sound, our political leaders do not either,” said Albert E. Caccese and Tom Baptist, Executive Directors of Audubon New York and Connecticut. “We applaud Congressman Israel and Congresswoman DeLauro for leading the charge with all the members of the Long Island Sound Congressional Caucus to keep people working on desperately needed water quality improvements, habitat protection initiatives, and enhanced public access opportunities so that future generations will be able to enjoy a cleaner, healthier Long Island Sound. We urge Congress to act quickly on this important bill.”

In addition to Reps. Israel and DeLauro, original cosponsors of the legislation include Reps. Tim Bishop (D – NY), Peter King (R – NY), Carolyn McCarthy (D – NY), Gary Ackerman (D – NY), Jim Himes (D – CT), Chris Murphy (D – CT), Joe Courtney (D – CT), John Larson (D – CT), José Serrano (D – NY) and Eliot Engel (D – NY).